



Solar Keymark Network Internal Regulations

SKN_N0102R23

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www.solarkeymark.eu

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1. Abbreviations

See SK Scheme rules.

2. Introduction to the Solar Keymark

2.1 General

The Solar Keymark (SK) is a certification scheme based on the general CEN Keymark rules laid down in the *CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations: Part 4 Certification (IR4)*. According to these regulations, the *Solar Keymark Scheme Rules* are published as specific “Keymark Scheme Rules” (see Clause 5 of IR4) and the Solar Keymark Network is established as “Keymark Scheme Group” (see Clause 6 of IR4).

The Solar Keymark Network (SKN) is a working group bringing together the interested and involved stakeholders and acts as an experience exchange circle of institutions active in Solar Keymark testing and certification. The SKN is responsible for developing and managing the Solar Keymark scheme and is operating according to the Solar Keymark Internal Regulations (this document).

The *Solar Keymark Scheme Rules* are defining the specific requirements and working rules related to the CEN Keymark certification of solar thermal products. The *Solar Keymark Scheme Rules* are managed by the SKN. Changes to the *Solar Keymark Scheme Rules* and the Annexes to the SKN Scheme Rules must be approved by the SKN and by the CCB represented by KMO.

2.2 The Solar Keymark Network

The Solar Keymark Network (SKN) coordinates all Solar Keymark (SK) testing, inspection, and conformity assessment activities based on the current version of the specific SK Scheme Rules for Solar Thermal Products.

The main activities of the SKN are:

- definition of working rules for the SKN, laid down in the SK internal regulations
- exchange of experience and harmonization of procedures;
- definition of guidelines how to proceed in cases where the available standards are unclear, outdated, limited in scope, inappropriate or not detailed enough;
- improve and further develop the Solar Keymark Scheme Rules;
- act as a clearing body in case of complaints, disputes and appeals, related to the certification activities;
- organize peer assessment activities;
- organize round robin testing to assure quality of test results from all testing laboratories;
- plan the budget for the SKN;
- approve the SKN fees;
- approve all SCF activities.

The SKN can take “Decisions” and “Resolutions”. A more detailed explanation is provided in Section 5.

2.3 The Solar Keymark Secretariat

The SK Secretariat (SKS) is held by Solar Heat Europe (SHE), the leading association representing the Solar Thermal Industry in Europe.

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The main duties of the SK Secretariat are:

- First contact point for any questions related with Solar Keymark
- Promoting the use of Solar Keymark to national authorities
- Promoting the use of Solar Keymark to industry
- Participating in the Solar Keymark Network meetings
- Organizing and administrating the votings of the SKN
- Participating in CEN/TC 312 and CEN/TC 312 WG meetings
- Communicating with CEN CMC and CCB and KMO
- Communicating with the EU Commission
- Administrate SCF Projects (administration, contracting, financial)
- Hosting and maintenance of the website solarkeymark.eu including:
 - Listing license holders
 - Listing accredited test labs
 - Listing empowered certification bodies
 - Updating SKN Documents
 - Issuing news with respect of recognition and acceptance of the Solar Keymark
- Leading the Marketing and Communication activities of the Network Manage database of the certified products

Furthermore, the SKS acts as the treasurer of the Solar Keymark Network and the Solar Certification Fund (SCF).

SCF

- Overall management of the SCF activities as described in the last version of the Solar Certification Fund Working Rules (document SCF_N0001Rx)
- Manage the SCF Steering group,
- Prepare the Organisation and Management of SCF calls, including the evaluation process.

The SKS can subcontract some of the work (e.g. maintenance of database).

It is possible to assign the tasks of the SKS to different persons. The representative of the SKN secretariat has no voting rights.

2.4 Solar Keymark Manager (SK Manager)

The main duty of the SKN Manager is to manage the SKN and the SCF.

SKN

- Planning and organizing the SKN meetings
- Participating in the Solar Keymark Network meetings
- Preparing the agenda for the SKN meetings
- Administration of all SKN documents
- Editing SKN scheme rules and SKN working rules
- Getting approval for the scheme rules from KMO
- Organize votings between SKN meetings
- First stage complaint processing
- First contact point for questions from manufacturers and others
- Reporting to CEN/TC 312 and ISO/TC 180
- Support to chair
- Preparation meetings with SHE
- Calculate the annual SKN fees

The SKN Manager can subcontract some of the work.

It is possible to assign the tasks of the SKN Manager to different persons.

The SKN manager has no voting rights. The SKN Manager can however be a representative of a TL, CB, IB or industry and vote as such.

2.5 Chairperson of the SKN

The SKN Chairperson is elected as an individual person for a period of 3 years. The SKN Chairperson may be re-elected for further terms.

The main duties of the SKN Chairperson are:

- Representing the SKN as its figurehead including external representation of the SKN
- Coordinating the SKN to ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the effective management of the SKN.
- Ensuring that the SKN is managed effectively and that the Management functions properly
- Ensuring that SKN meetings are held in accordance with the internal regulations
- Participating and chairing the SKN meetings including:
 - Preparation of the meeting agenda together with the SKN Manager
 - Ensuring full participation
 - Ensuring that all relevant matters are discussed
 - Ensuring that effective decisions are made and carried out.
 - Editing, checking and approving minutes
- Reviewing regularly the status of the WGs and ongoing SCF Projects to make sure that the expected results are provided to the SKN
- Editing the SKN scheme rules and SKN working rules together with the SKN Manager
- Receiving proposals and preparing appropriate decisions/resolutions
- Providing support and supervision to the SKN Manager and the Secretariat.

The SKN chairman has no voting rights. The SKN Chairman can however be a representative of a TL, CB, IB or from industry and vote as such.

2.6 Keymark Management Organisation KMO

CEN is the owner of the Keymark. The management of the certification schemes is outsourced to KMO which is appointed by CEN according to CEN's internal procedures.

KMO is the central contact point for all questions relating to the Keymark in the domain of CEN. The KMO's main responsibilities are defined in a contract between CEN and KMO.

For the Solar Keymark certification the main responsibilities of KMO are:

- Maintaining the general Keymark website and database
- Overall coordination between the various Keymark schemes
- Empowerment of Keymark CBs within Keymark certification
- Approval of the Scheme Rules in accordance with the Internal Regulations Part 4 "Certification"
- Maintain the general Keymark webpage www.keymark.eu
- Manage misuse of the Keymark.

The KMO has no voting rights.

3. Requirements and obligations for CBs, TLs and IBs

The general requirements are given in Chapter 9 of part B of the CIR4.

The additional requirements/rules in this specific scheme are the following:

- All CBs, TLs and IBs shall participate actively in the SKN as laid down in the SK IR.
- The TLs shall be accredited in accordance with ISO 17025 for the standards listed in the Solar Keymark Scheme Rules Clause 2.3 for which the TL provides testing services.

- The TL must be recognized by at least one SK CB.
- The CBs shall collect a fee (see Chapter 6 of the Solar Keymark Scheme Rules) for each valid license to be transferred to the secretariat of the SKN.
- IBs shall have sufficient expertise in solar thermal technology. It is under the responsibility of the CB to recognise and employ inspectors.
- CBs and TLs shall be listed together with their accreditation certificates on the SKN webpage. TLs and independent IBs shall be listed on the SKN webpage mentioning the recognising CB.
- In case of doubts about the interpretation of the Scheme Rules and the standards or if CBs/TLs/IBs step over other unclear situations related with the SK certification, the CBs/TLs/IBs shall get advice from other CBs/TLs/IBs as appropriate. The CBs/TLs/IBs shall then bring their decisions and solutions into the SKN to improve the SK working rules and to make sure that all work according to the same procedures.

4. Members of the SKN

The SKN is in principle open to parties interested in improving and further developing the SK Scheme Rules. Depending on the status of the participants, specific obligations and/or restrictions apply. Participants must be registered as members of the SKN. An updated member list of all members and permanent observers shall be kept by the SKN Manager and published on the SKN webpage.

Members of the SKN are invited to the SKN meetings and receive all relevant documents required for active participation in the SKN. Members can be organisations or persons. Organisations have to name their persons involved in the SKN.

4.1 Obligatory members

For the following entities the membership and participation in the SKN Meetings is mandatory.

- Solar Keymark empowered certification bodies (organisation)
- Solar Keymark recognised testing laboratories and inspection bodies (organisation)
- SKN Chairman
- SKN Manager
- SCF Chairman (in case SCF topics are on the agenda)
- Representative from SKN secretariat
- Representative from KMO

The accreditation certificates for certification bodies and test laboratories shall be published at the SK website.

Obligatory member organisation have one vote per organisation.

4.2 Industrial representatives

By preference up to two national industrial representatives can be nominated by national solar thermal associations, when possible. The nomination has to be approved by the SKN manager

The industrial representatives are listed on the SK website together with the mentioning national solar thermal association that is being represented. The industry representative(s) shall also be the first contact point for the national industry and for other national stakeholders for all questions related to the Solar Keymark. Industry representatives who are not taking part in SKN meetings for more than two meetings in a row can be deleted from the member list.

Industrial members have one voting right per representative.

4.3 Observers and guests

Observers: Representatives from the following groups are welcome as participants without voting rights:

- Certification bodies in the process of empowerment
- Testing laboratories in the process of accreditation
- Inspection bodies in the process of accreditation
- Representatives of CCB
- Representatives such as liaison officers of CEN/TC 312, ISO/TC 180, IEC/TC 117 and other related TCs.
- Representatives of consumer organisations
- Representatives of any other solar thermal associations worldwide
- Representatives of other solar thermal certification schemes seeking good collaboration with SK such as for example SRCC or SHAMCI

Other observers and guest are welcome but shall be approved by the Chairperson. Observers are considered as permanent members of the SKN. Observers not taking part in SKN meetings for more than two meetings in a row can be deleted from the member list.

The SKN Chairperson may invite experts to give relevant input on issues on the SKN meeting agenda. Any SKN member can propose to the SKN Chairperson, to invite experts for specific items of the agenda of the meetings. Guests are one-time attendees and are not listed as members of the SKN.

Observers and guests have no voting rights.

4.4 Peer groups

The members with voting rights are assigned to one of the three peer groups:

- A. Certification bodies
- B. Testing laboratories and inspection bodies
- C. Industrial representatives

It is not possible to be member of more than one peer group.

5. Decisions and resolutions

The SKN takes so called “decisions” and “resolutions”.

Decisions concerning changes in the following documents are called resolutions:

- SKN Internal Regulations (this document)
- SK Scheme Rules
- Annexes to the SK Scheme Rules

All other decisions of the SKN are called decisions.

Resolutions and decisions can be taken during SKN meetings or by circular. For resolutions by circular the rules in 7.3.1 apply.

Proposals for resolutions shall include a proposal on how to include / implement the resolution in the related document.

Proposals for resolutions shall be sent to the SKN Manager at least 3 weeks before the meeting. The formulation of the proposal must be approved by the SKN Chairman and SKN Manager.

6. The SKN Meetings

The SKN meets at least twice a year. These meetings can be performed as physical meetings or as web meetings. The SKN Meetings always take place in:

- Week 11: Tuesday and Wednesday
- Week 43: Tuesday and Wednesday

Whether a meeting takes place as a physical meeting or as an online meeting is decided by decision of the SKN.

- Physical meetings usually take place on Tuesday 13:00-18:00 and Wednesday 09:00-13:00. If possible, together with other meetings such as IEA Task meetings, GSCN meetings, CEN/TC 312 and ISO/TC 180 meetings, etc.
- Online meetings usually take place on Tuesday 09:00-12:00 and on Wednesday 0900-1200.

Information about upcoming and past meetings of the SKN, including meetings agendas and minutes, is regularly displayed on the Solar Keymark website.

Deviations are possible by decision of the SKN.

The SKN can organize additional meetings if necessary.

6.1 Preparation of meetings

The SKN Manager shall make the invitation to the meeting available at least 8 weeks before the meeting. The meeting documents are sent out to the SKN members by email.

All input to the draft agenda (proposals for decisions and resolutions or any other item to be added) shall be sent to SKN Manager at least 3 weeks before the meeting. The SKN Manager shall circulate the final draft agenda 2 weeks before the meeting.

In the absence of the SKN Chairperson, the SKN appoints a chair for the duration of one meeting. In the absence of the SKN Manager, the SKN appoints a manager for the duration of one meeting.

6.2 Meeting reporting

The SKN meeting minutes shall report all decisions and resolutions of the meeting using the coding:

“Decision My.Dx -Title”, with x = number of decision, y = number of meeting, Title = the title of the decision.

and

“Resolution My.Rx -Title”, with x = number of resolution, y = number of meeting, Title = the title of the resolution.

If resolutions are taken, the SKN scheme rules shall be revised accordingly, and submitted to the KMO for approval within a maximum of 2 weeks. KMO is expected to answer within a maximum of 2 weeks. No answer from KMO is considered as approval.

The revised SKN Scheme rules are then published and valid upon publication.

The draft minutes of the meeting shall be circulated not later than 4 weeks after the meeting. The minutes will be considered as approved if there are no significant comments sent to the SKN Chairperson and/or SKN manager within 4 weeks after having been sent out. The final approval of the minutes will be done formally at the following SKN meeting.

A list of all decisions of the SKN is published on solarkeymark.eu

The approved minutes of the meetings are published on solarkeymark.eu

6.3 Obligation to participate in the SKN Meetings

To ensure the experience exchange and training for testing, inspection and certification, the obligatory members shall participate in every SKN meeting represented at least by one person attending the meeting.

For physical meetings once per year, physical attendance is strongly recommended but voluntary for obligatory members. The representing person is voting on behalf of the organisation. The attendance requirement is fulfilled if the organisation has voted at least on 75 % of the votings. In this context, also an abstention is considered as voting.

Physical SKN Meetings offer the possibility to attend via web. This option is however mainly intended for additional participants of obligatory members and for additional representatives of industry. In case an obligatory member is not physically attending the meeting, then web attendance is still obligatory and not considered as an absence.

Excuses for absence: In case of real excuses (accident, illness, airplane delay, etc.) the reason must be explained to the SKN and must be approved by the SKN.

First absence: Obligatory members missing a SKN meeting without approved excuse will be charged a no-show fee of 1.000 €. Approved excuses are not considered as absence. If this amount is not paid until the next SKN meeting the member has to present their case and they may lose their voting rights until a decision by the SKN.

Second absence out of 5 without excuse: Obligatory members missing a second SKN meeting without an approved excuse, will be charged a no-show fee of 1.000 € per missed meeting. In addition to that, the SKN Manager will inform the responsible CBs (in case of testing laboratories or inspection bodies) or KMO (in case of CB) on behalf of SKN to contact the obligatory SKN member in writing to announce the suspension of this organisation from the SKN. The organisation will be deleted from the official Solar Keymark website and from the SKN member list. Until further notice, the organisation shall not provide any service within the Solar Keymark certification system. The certificate holders of such third parties are informed by the SKN Manager that they should find a new testing laboratory and/or CB as soon as possible.

6.4 Participation in SK Working groups

One of the key instruments of the SKN are the working groups (WGs) dealing with specific topics considered important by the SKN. To establish (and to close) such a SKN WG a decision of the SKN is required. Participation in WGs is voluntary and unpaid work. A list of all active working groups is found on solarkeymark.eu

7. Voting and voting rights

7.1 General

The SKN will always endeavour to find broad consensus. Decisions and resolutions are then taken either by voting during the SKN meetings or by circular. The applicable rules are outlined in the following clauses.

All formal votes are taken using a web-tool (also during physical meetings).
Voting is public: The individual votes are published as Annexes to the minutes.

7.2 Voting preconditions

All formal votes (decisions and resolutions) shall be clearly formulated to be answered with "Yes", "No", "Abstain" only.

Any urgent matter not mentioned on the final agenda can be brought up during a SKN meeting. The SKN then decides by a decision whether such an item can be discussed and whether a decision/resolution on the topic can be taken during the ongoing meeting.

7.3 Rules for taking decisions and resolutions

In case of a formal voting, all votes (positive, negative and abstentions) shall be counted. For the determination of the majority, abstentions are not counted.

Every vote must be given as member of one (1) of the “peer groups”. Nobody is allowed to vote as member of more than one peer group.

For a decision, a simple majority of all the voters plus a simple majority of the peer groups (50 % majority within peer group) is required.

For resolutions a 2/3 majority of all the voters and a 2/3 majority within all peer groups is required.

A 2/3 majority of any peer group can claim to postpone a decision to the next SN meeting.

A 2/3 majority of the votes of a peer group can veto a decision.

For all these acceptance rules, abstentions are not counted.

7.3.1 Decisions and resolutions by circular (DRC)

In between the meetings decisions and resolutions may be taken by circular (i.e. without discussion and by electronic means only). Such decisions and resolutions by circular (DRCs) are possible on every last day of a month, proposals for DRCs must be circulated at least 14 days before the voting ends.

A missing vote is counted as abstention.

Every DRC consists of three questions, two administrative lead-in questions and the proposal for a decision/resolution itself:

- 1.) Do you want to postpone this decision/resolution to the next SKN? (Y/N/A)
- 2.) Do you want to veto this decision/resolution? (Y/N/A)
- 3.) Proposal (Y/N/A)

Proposal must be submitted to SKN Chairman and SKN Manager	Proposal is distributed to SKN	Voting ends
10.01	15.01	31.01 23:59
10.02	15.02	28.02 23:59
10.03	15.03	31.03 23:59
10.04	15.04	30.04 23:59
10.05	15.05	31.05 23:59
10.06	15.06	30.06 23:59
10.07	15.07	31.07 23:59
10.08	15.08	31.08 23:59
10.09	15.09	30.09 23:59
10.10	15.10	31.10 23:59
10.11	15.11	30.11 23:59
10.12	15.12	31.12 23:59

8. The CB Working group

To ensure consistency in certification decisions and procedures, the CBs are organized in a CB working group (CB WG). Whenever different interpretations of the reference standards can result in different certification decisions, the empowered certification bodies shall find out and agree on a common understanding so as to avoid any discrepancy. This common understanding has further to be followed by all empowered certification bodies. Decisions made by the CB WG shall be submitted to the SKN as proposals for decisions or resolutions. The CB WG informs in every SKN Meeting about outcomes of the CB WG meetings.

9. Confidentiality

All Solar Keymark Network documents (Official Solar Keymark Network documents are the ones that have a Solar Keymark Document number) are by default public. As an exception, all documents related with a complaint case are by default considered as confidential for obvious reasons. It is however a duty of the SK Manager to report in an anonymized and public form about every complaint case.

10. Solar Certification Fund (SCF)

The Solar Certification Fund (SCF) supports initiatives related to the advancement and implementation of activities focused on testing, certification, and standardization of solar thermal products.

The budget and the projects of the SCF shall be approved by the SKN.

The SCF is managed and organised by the SK Secretariat according to the SCF Working Rules. The SCF Working Rules shall be approved by the SKN in a resolution.